



TOXIC CHEMICALS IN SALON PRODUCTS: What You Need to Know

Due to a lack of government oversight, many products used in hair and nail salons contain a number of hazardous chemicals that may harm your health. Below are some particularly toxic chemicals to avoid in salon products, along with the health problems these chemicals are linked to.

CHEMICAL NAME	FOUND IN THESE PRODUCTS	SYMPTOMS OF EXPOSURE	POTENTIAL LONG TERM EFFECTS
Dibutyl Phthalate	Nail polish	Nausea, dizziness, eye and skin irritation	Reproductive toxin, birth defects
Formaldehyde or methylene glycol	Nail hardener, nail polish, keratin hair straighteners	Breathing problems, coughing, wheezing, skin rashes, eye, nose, throat irritation	Cancer, dermatitis
Toluene	Nail polish, nail glue, hair dye, wig glue/ hairpiece bonding	Dizziness, headaches, skin rashes, eye, nose, throat irritation	Liver damage, kidney damage, birth defects, pregnancy loss
Methyl Methacrylate (MMA)	Artificial nails	Breathing problems, chest tightness, eye, nose, throat irritation, headaches, confusion	Loss of smell, reproductive toxin, asthma
Cyclopentasiloxane or cyclomethicone	Flat iron sprays, thermal protection sprays	Under the high heat of a flat iron, cyclopentasiloxane creates formaldehyde. Formaldehyde leads to breathing problems, coughing, wheezing, skin rashes, eye, nose, throat irritation	Formaldehyde exposure may cause cancer, dermatitis
Styrene	Hair extension glue, lace wig glue	Vision problems, trouble concentrating, tiredness	Cancer
Trichlorethylene	Hair extension glue, lace wig glue	Dizziness, headache, confusion, nausea, eye and skin irritation	Liver damage, kidney damage, dermatitis, double vision
1,4 Dioxane	Hair extension glue, lace wig glue	Eye and nose irritation	Cancer, liver damage, kidney damage
2-butoxyethanol or Ethylene glycol monobutyl ether	Disinfectants, cleaners	Headache, eye and nose irritation	Reproductive toxin

READY TO GIVE YOUR SALON VISITS A MAKEOVER?

Download and print this fact sheet and bring it to your stylist or manicurist. Ask if any of the chemicals listed are in the products he or she uses on your hair or nails. If yes, you may want to talk to your stylist about switching to a safer alternative.

Note: This list is not exhaustive. More research is needed to both better identify hazardous chemicals used in salon products, and to develop safer chemical alternatives for harmful chemicals commonly in use.

For more information and resources about toxic chemicals in salon products, salon worker health and safety issues, and how you can get involved, go to www.womensvoices.org.



WOMEN'S VOICES FOR THE EARTH

OUR HEALTH. OUR FUTURE. TOXIC FREE.

WOMENSVOICES@WOMENSVOICES.ORG

WWW.WOMENSVOICES.ORG

(406) 543-3747